

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VIENTI 00674 291249Z

42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W
----- 078586

R 291122Z JAAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2324
INFFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0674

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECDEF; CINCPAC; CDR JCRC CP SAMAE SAN THAI

D/PW FOR SIEVERTS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, CASC, LA
SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY LETTER ON DEAN/SHARMAN
CASE

REF: A) VIENTIANE 0436
B) CANBERRA 0544

1. FOLLOWING IS AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY'S ENGLISH TRANSLATIOON
OF LETTER IN FRENCH TO MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PHOUMI
VONGVICHIT FROM AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR BORTHWICK CON-
CERNING DEAN/SHARMAN, DATED JANUARY 21.

2. BEGIN TEXT: QUOTE -

EXCELLENCY,
YOU WILL FORGIVE ME I HOPE FOR FINDING SOMEWHAT
DISURBING THAT PART OF OUR CONVERSATION YESTERDAY WHICH
DEALT WITH THE CASE OF THE AUSTRALIAN, NEIL SHARMAN, NOW
IN THE CUSTODY OF THE NEO LAO HAK SAT. AS YOU WILL BE
AWARE WE ARE ACCUSTOMED TOO SHARE WITH THE EMBASSY OF
THE UNITED STATES WHHATEVER INFORMATION IS MADE AVAILABLE
FROM THE APPROPRIATE LAO AUTHORITIES. I WOULD LIKE TO
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TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REFER TO THE LETTER ADDRESSED TO YOU ON JANUARY 20 BY MY COLLEAGUE, MR. WHITEHOUSE, AND TO SAY THAT THE INFORMATION SET OUT THEREIN SEEMS CLEARLY TO ESTABLISH THE IMPRISONMENT OF MR. SHARMAN AS EARLIER REPORTED. IT FOLLOWS FROM THIS THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT, AND PUBLIC OPINION IN AUSTRALIA, WILL EXPECT THE CONCERNED AUTHORITIES OF THE NEO LAO HAK SAT TO DISCHARGE THEIR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THEIR PRISONER.

INDEED, IN VIEW OF THE LAPSE OF TIME SINCE THE EVENTS COVERED BY THE REPORT MOST RECENTLY MADE AVAILABLE TO YOU I HOPE THAT I MAY BE PERMITTED TO LOOK FORWARD THE SPEEDY RESOLUTION OF THIS MATTER BY THE EARLY RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS AND THEIR RETURN IN SAFETY TO THEIR FAMILIES. WHATEVER TRESPASSES THESE TWO YOUNG MEN MAY UNWITTINGLY HAVE COMMITTED ARE SURELY DISCHARGED BY THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THEIR IMPRISONMENT UNTIL NOW.

IN THIS CONNECTION MAY I EXPRESS MY THANKS AND APPRECIATION OF THE TIME YOU HAVE SO FREELY MADE AVAILABLE TO MYSELF AND MY COLLEAGUES FOR THE DISCUSSION OF MR. SHARMAN'S CASE, AND REAFFIRM MY HOPE THAT AS A CONSEQUENCE THE ISSUE MAY SOON BE DISPOSED OF IN THE MOST FAVORABLE WAY.

(COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE) UNQUOTE.
END TEXT.

3. FOR CANBERRA: BORTHWICK'S WEAK AND WORDY LETTER CONFIRMS OUR VIEWS STATED IN PARA 5 REFTEL A. WE DO NOT EXPECT BORTHWICK TO ADOPT A MORE VIGOROUS POSTURE UNLESS HE IS FURTHER PRODDED BY GOA. WE APPRECIATE CANBERRA'S EFFORTS IN THIS REGARD.

WHITEHOUSE

NOTE: NOT PASSED.

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS
*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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To: CANBERRA
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